L'edge

Newspaper of the National Christian Youth Convention, Adelaide 8 - 14 January 1995 Issue No 16 March 1995

REFLECTIONS ON NCYC

THIS IS THE FINAL ISSUE OF L'EDGE

THANKS TO ALL OUR READERS WHO HELPED MAKE US A SPECIAL PART OF NCYC '95.

L'EDS asked DAVID GARDINER to write some reflections on NCYC'95. Here they are.

IT OCCURS to me that I would need a very big mirror to reflect on NCYC'95. You've really got to wonder about the L'Eds. Sometimes they're a bit impractical. So, in the interests of cost saving, I'll reflect on NCYC'95 without the aid of shiny surfaces of any kind.

I guess my experience was slightly different from your average delegate. Being a local, I had taken the opportunity not just to attend, but be involved. For me, this has meant writing for *LEdge*, the newspaper of NCYC'95 and providing some help in computing matters.

In the week leading up to NCYC there were a thousand things to do. Well, two thousand if it involved delegate packs! *LEdge* had stories to plan and prepare and there was plenty of last-minute need for computing support.

I think it was this time, spent at the NCYC office in the city, and then later in the week out at Scotch College, that gave me a sense of appreciation of the incredible commitment of the people involved in NCYC.

During the convention week these people — administrators, office workers, tech crew, security and others — would be working flat out, so that week before NCYC'95 was a unique time.

Things got under way on Sunday, with registrations, moving in and meeting communities, then the first of many bus trips, this one to Adelaide city for tea at the Exhibition Hall.

Ill never forget sitting down to dinner with 2,000 odd other people. Not that the other people were odd. It's just an expression. The food was good (an important thing) and it was an opportunity to sit down and get to know other delegates.

After tea, the first evening rally.

Wow. It was everything and more that I had imagined. When I entered the Convention Centre I was greeted by fire eaters, crazy people on stilts, acrobats, jugglers, bubble-blowers, and the other 2,000 delegates. I think that sense of excitement from that first evening remained with people for every rally following.

One of the things that impressed me about NCYC was the speakers, both of them. Now I dont mean those big black boxes either side of the stage with the sound coming out. Not that kind of speakers!

Traditionally, NCYCs have had one person as a key speaker. This time Adelaide had two. Not because two is better than one, but because two speakers were appropriate. This seemed to work really well, with Duffy Robbins' and Caesar Molebatsis messages appealing to people of all ages.

When I interviewed members of the Rallies task group for a *LEdge* article last year, they promised a "Worship Experience". I wasn't disappointed, what with fantastic drama, dance, liturgy and music. The choirs of delegates that sang in the final rally on the Friday night were unbelievable.

It showed what people were capable of when they took themselves (dare I say it?) to The Edge.

There, Ive said it now. The Edge. For of course that was the theme for NCYC95. People were called, nudged, stretched, taken to The Edge — and, as the poem says, they flew. They found that their limits were not Gods limits.

NCYC'95 was a special time in my life where I was regularly taken to The Edge and, though often my arms were tired, I still flew.

NCYC '95
(The National Christian Youth Convention) is an activity of the Uniting Church in Australia.

L'Edge **is the monthly publication produced on behalf of NCYC '95.**

L'Edge **is published as a supplement to *New Times*, monthly news magazine of the Uniting Church, Synod of South Australia, First Floor, 33 Pirie Street, Adelaide SA 5000.**

NCYC '95 MISSION STATEMENT

"To construct a community which so reflects the Kingdom of God that people will be changed."

Tasmania - NCYC'97

EVER wanted to experience white water rafting? Abseiling in the Cataract Gorge? Walking through untouched wilderness? Then the Tasmanian NCYC'97 will be for you.

Tasmania will hold its first ever NCYC from Wednesday, January 1 to Tuesday 7, 1997.

"Expect Tasmania to be different from any other convention that has ever been held before," says Bruce Mullan, Tasmanian Youth Ministry Consultant.

"It will be different because it's tied in with the whole church and not just one segment or city.

"It will reflect a lot of what Tasmania is about. Tassie is about hospitality and community, seeing ourselves as a church, not just as a parish or individuals.

"Tassie's different because it's made up of small cities and towns. It has a country feel about it.

"It's small. That means we can move people all over the state — something we haven't been able to do with other conventions.

"Each community during the convention will be able to travel to a different part of the state on the Friday afternoon and spend a day and a half of the convention at that place.

"While in these places, delegates will be able to explore the areas, get to know the people and enjoy the hospitality in that area.

"The unique thing about Tasmania NCYC is the fact that people won't be in just one place during the week. They'll get to travel and see some of the features of Tassie, such as the beaches, the bush, the national parks or some of the historical stuff."

Delegates may also want to take the opportunity to travel after the convention.

"Some people may want to walk the overland track from Cradle Mountain to Lake Sinclair, or go on a water rafting expedition down the South East River, travel down the west coast and catch a boat up the Gordon River, or visit Port Arthur," says Bruce.

NCYC 1997 Registration Delegate No.1, Craig Bailey, hands his deposit of $50 to Bruce Mullan, Tasmanian Youth Consultant

SPOT THE TIGER

NCYC 1997 could give you the opportunity to join the hunt for the supposedly extinct Tasmanian Tiger (*Thylacine*). There have been recent reports of rare sightings of the tiger.

Tasmanian ranger, Charlie Beasley, is said to have spotted the tiger on Friday, January 27, according to the Tasmanian *Examiner* on Saturday, January 28.

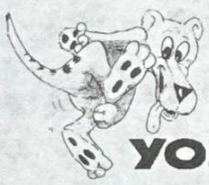
"I observed the animal for about two minutes — he seemed to be just sort of sniffing around and looking around — the wind was quite strong in the area," said Charlie. "He looked about half the size of a german shepherd.

"I know a lot of people are going to think that I'm crazy — and I've always had that question mark about thylacines. But now that I've seen one I will believe it."

Evidence for the existence of the Tiger has been amassing for the last 30 years, since its extinction during the 1930's.

So why not come to NCYC'97? You may be one of the lucky ones and catch a glimpse of the rare animal.

TIGER SPOTTING IN TASMANIA



NATIONAL CHRISTIAN YOUTH CONVENTION 1997

Registration is open to anyone 16 yrs of age by 31.12.96 or older.

Accommodation choices are:

Fully paid by	Budget	College	Own
30.9.95	*$299*	*$399*	*$269*
30.4.96	*$324*	*$424*	*$294*
30.11.96	*$349*	*$449*	*$319*

Write to the NCYC 1997 office, or your state youth ministry office, for full registration forms. Ring the NCYC 1997 office for special group rates.

NCYC 1997 Convention Office, 96 Margaret Street, Launceston, Tas 7250.
Phone (003) 31 9784. Fax (003) 34 1480.

NATIONAL CHRISTIAN YOUTH CONVENTION TASMANIA

LIVING THE LEGEND

NO STAMP REQUIRED

LIVING THE LEGEND

THE theme for NCYC 1997 is also a little out of the ordinary. It is *Living the Legend.*

"People living the Christian life are legends," says Bruce. "They're doing something special, not something ordinary.

"The theme connects people with all the Christian heroes of the past, across the globe. It's part of a big movement. No one's alone."

Jesus was one of those Christian heroes. He was about radically changing things and, in a sense, this is what God's spirit does for us," says Bruce.

"We're the continuing legend. We're carrying out the Christian story.

"Our Christian understanding of our relationship with God starts with Jesus, but Jesus' life was very short.

"The story continues through God's spirit working through Christian people. And that's what *Living the Legend* is. It links God's spirit to us and the carrying on of the work of Jesus — and this is part of that Christian story."

According to Bruce, *Living the Legend* is not just a theme.

"The whole convention is focusing on the corporate nature of faith," he says. "It will look at us and Jesus. It will look at the Christian story as being a corporate activity and something that we are all involved in.

"When you begin to take your Christian life seriously and live it out, you're not on your own. You're part of the group of people *living the legend.*"

NCYC 1997's speakers, Wali Fejo, Merilyn Correy, Dorothy McRae-McMahon and Subramaniam Manopavan, will raise issues which will challenge delegates to follow the Christian story and *Live the Legend.*

Bruce says people will be asked to reflect on questions like: What is the corporate nature of our faith? How do we see the church? What we can learn from the scriptures? How can we become agents for change to the church body and bring "the kingdom stuff to our Australian culture"?

"Young people don't have all the wisdom. Neither do old people have all the energy. But when the whole church works together, there's a chance we can become a force for radical change."

If you are interested in *Living the Legend* or experiencing the unique things that Tasmania has to offer then contact the NCYC 1997 Convention Office on (003) 31 9784 or the Youth Ministry Office in your State.

Justice or Just Us?

DURING NCYC, 65 delegates stayed in the Old Adelaide Gaol. It was more than just a place to stay. It was a place to consider issues. "We tackled issues that the location brought up, mainly issues relating to the gaol," says Ian Telfer, Gaol Community Leader.

"We thought about imprisonment, what it feels like to be imprisoned and the effect that it has on people's lives.

"We also discussed rehabilitation and justice for victims of offences — and alternative models of imprisonment and punishment."

Ian says that there was a broad age group in the community.

"We were aged between 16 and 30," he says.

"This made it difficult to have one speaker to appeal to all groups. We overcame the problem by having a wide range of speakers. We had ex-offenders from OARS (Offenders Aid Rehabilitation Services), prison chaplains, people who work in the justice system and prison officers.

"Speakers dealt with particular topics, but they did it in a way that was based on experience. They didn't come to give a particular intellectual view. Rather they explained what it feels like to be in prison and what effects that has on their lives.

"For example, a prison officer told us what it feels like to be a prison officer, how it affects their lives and what type of relationships they have with prisoners."

Ian says the community also tried to tackle issues in terms of NCYC and Christian perspectives.

"The issues of imprisonment and justice were picked up in worship, prayers and music," he says.

"We tried to make it a religious and spiritual experience as well as a political one. We also tried to look at what the Bible, Christ and the church say about issues of justice."

Real life experiences

Ian says the community was blessed by the Bible study leaders.

"Bible study leaders such as Caesar Molebatsi and Neil Smith talked about their real life experiences," he says.

"Caesar talked about his time in jail, the torture that he endured and the effect that has had upon his life.

"Other bible study leaders such as Dr Veronica Brady and Dorothy McRae-McMahon talked about the walk with Jesus and what that means for people on the edge of society."

Ian relates the experience in the gaol to the theme of NCYC.

"I saw prisoners as being on the edge of society. The edge for each of us in the community was different.

"Some people will go to the edge in serving people in gaols. They will make contact with ex-prisoners or people who are still in gaol."

Ian found this time in the gaol community challenging, but special.

"It was special in terms of being with people from all over the country who chose to be in the gaol community.

"The commitment to the community was really impressive. People really wanted to be there.

"A lot of the people in the community had had brushes with the law. They, their family or their friends had had something to do with the justice system, which was really challenging to them. They came to open themselves up and deal with these issues again."

L'EDS

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It was smiles all round for these delegates as they looked back on NCYC '95 and the friendships they had formed during the week.

'Go to the Edge'

By LIZ YEO

IF NCYC raised questions for you about your future, then start digging out those brochures you picked up — and didn't have time to read. One of them asked if you were "Prepared to be unprepared?"

Maybe NCYC got you inspired to step out of the familiar and comfortable. If that's the case there are a number of challenging opportunities for you to serve God, both in Australia and overseas, for anything from three weeks to three years.

You don't need particular skills, just a willingness to explore your faith, live simply and share whatever gifts you have.

If you were affected by the witness of Caesar Molebatsi, you may want to explore the possibility of spending time alongside South African Christians who are working for a new future of peace and justice.

There are possibilities for Volunteers in Mission to work with young people in the Central Methodist Mission in Johannesburg, South Africa.

The Uniting Church's Volunteers in Mission Program is for young people from 17 to 30. You raise your own support and participate from six to 12 months.

Volunteers have been involved in a range of different situations, for example, English teaching in Indonesia, child care in India, youth work in the Pacific Islands, helping out in an Aboriginal school in Townsville or a nursing home in the Northern Territory.

Interns in Mission serve overseas for 15 months in situations of oppression and injustice. This is followed by a year back in Australia working with struggling communities here.

Interns are between 20 and 30 years old. They receive a basic living allowance throughout the program. Interns go to countries like South Africa, Israel-Palestine, El Salvador and Sri Lanka.

If you are initially looking for a short term cross cultural experience apply for About FACE 4, which takes place in January 1996.

Being a volunteer or Intern in Mission or an About FACE participant is a life changing experience. You will come to see God, yourself and you own culture in new ways. Give it a go!

For more information or application forms contact your Synod Youth Ministry Consultant or Liz Yeo, Youth Mission Coordinator, Uniting Church Assembly, PO Box A2266, Sydney South, New South Wales 2000. Phone (02) 287 0900, Fax: (02) 287 0999.

My time in gaol

by EMMA KELSH

IT WAS an unexplainable feeling which lead me to apply to spend my week of NCYC in the Old Adelaide Gaol. The spiel describing the awful conditions of the gaol "crazily" attracted my attention.

I definitely thought it would be challenging to stay there, challenging my own personal strengths and fears.

My age was a little intimidating at first. No one else at NCYC seemed to be 16 years old. However, from not knowing anyone when I arrived at the gaol, within five minutes I felt I knew everyone.

I was ready for the crude graffiti which I would see at the gaol, but nothing could have prepared me for some of the short poems scratched in the cell doors — words desperately demanding from God an answer of why he'd let this happen to them. I could feel a part of the desperation and despair felt by the criminals who had been "cut-off" from the world, not six years before.

In a society which totally discriminates against prisoners, we had been lead to believe that the ones occupying our gaols were almost inhuman and deserved our disrespect. Through my gaol experience at NCYC, I now have a growing appreciation of the prisoners humanity.

I would lie on my bed, feeling the contours in the mattress where someone else had slept. I would asks myself, Who else has lain here and counted the ceiling boards?

In the 30 degree heat in the cell I would touch the stone wall for its coolness. I felt like I was tracing someone else's movements. I felt the restrictions of the solid wall.

We can justifiably love the prisoners as Jesus taught us to, but we can not forget that prisons are a necessity in a society that chooses to live as it does at the moment.

Although we (the NCYC gaol community) could *never* feel what the gaol would be like unless we were put in an actual criminal situation, we did the absolute *most* to perceive what the gaol environment would be like.

I hope now that God will allow me to use my experience at the gaol to encourage others in their life and faith.

NCYC merchandise

MISSED the opportunity to purchase the great music merchandise available at NCYC? Well, don't fear, you still have one last chance.

L I F E
T R U T H

& F R E E D O M

Life, Truth and Freedom music and songbooks were sold out — but more are now available. Get in quick while stocks last!

CD — $20. **Tapes — $14.**

Songbooks — $20.

OR take advantage of the NCYC Music Combo pack. This pack comprises of a CD and Songbook for only $35, a saving of $5.

***If interested in making a purchase contact the NCYC'95 Office on (08) 212 4066 before* March 31.**

top 10

TOP 10 THINGS YOU'VE DONE SINCE NCYC '95
By Lisa Chapman

1. Rang the NCYC office to try to get the address of that cute guy/girl you met on the last day of NCYC. Only problem is you only know the first name.
2. Slept.
3. Re-read all you copies of *L'Edge* to relive the NCYC experience.
4. Told all your friends that you had the best week of your life.
5. Tried out some of those pick up lines.
6. Bought a new doona to replace the one you left behind.
7. Written heaps of letters to all your new friends.
8. Read the post-NCYC *L'Edge* from cover to cover.
9. Annoyed everyone in the house by playing the NCYC tape/CD at full volume.
10. Registered for NCYC'97. See you there!

Thank you to all of our sponsors, who helped make NCYC'95 such a success:

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION...

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EDDIE
the edgeiton: the FINAL CHAPTER.
Written by Russell Bowrey
Guest appearance by: DAVO THE LEG OF HAM
Gidayl I just had to see you all one last time.
NCYC OFFICE
Nah! NCYC seems gonks ago already!
THE DAILY GRIND
I managed to catch up with Tamzin before she left for Tazzie...
THE LOVE BOAT
But now I've got to start fundraising for 1997!
So until then we got to be love at long distance
L'END

PLEASE NOTE

THE NCYC OFFICE WILL CLOSE MARCH 31